

IS EVERY TAGHUT A KAFIR?

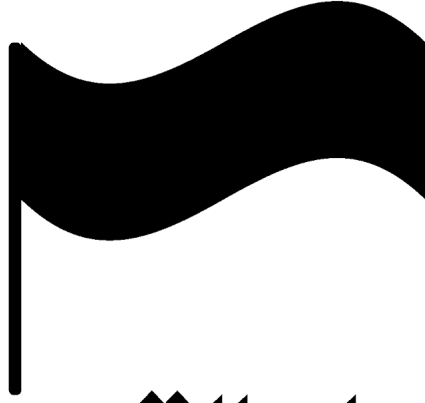


LEADER OF MISGUIDANCE



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Is Every *Taghut* a Kafir?



أهل التوحيد

Publications

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

All praise belongs to Allah, *al-Qawi, al-Matin*. And may the *salah* and *salam* [of Allah] be upon him who was sent with the sword as a mercy to *al-'alamin*. As for what follows:

The question in the title seems plainly obvious to the reader who is familiar with the Quran and the speech of the *'ulama*. But, nevertheless, those who are earnest in misleading the masses of the *ummah* into entering under the *wilayah* of the apostates who have usurped the lands in Arabia and elsewhere have undertaken to distort the texts and lie upon the scholars to cover up the truth. In an article entitled “The Meaning of Taghut and it’s (spelling mistake taken from the original) Relation to Kufr, Judgment and the Rulers,” Abu Khabithah (Abu Khadijah), a head of misguidance, sought to paint a different picture from the obvious fact that every *taghut* is a *kafir* by compiling some statements of scholars in regard to the meaning of *taghut*.¹ He starts the sub-heading saying, “The Meaning of Taghut According to the Early Scholars & That It Does Not Necessitate Kufr in Every Case.” A question arose as to why would he think it was necessary to write such an article? He lets us know soon after:

The word taghut is mentioned in several places throughout the Quran and its meaning is distorted by the radical preachers to refer to the disbelievers or to major idolatry, and since some of the great scholars mentioned in their writings that ‘the one who does not rule by that which Allah has revealed’ is a taghut, then they conclude that all of the rulers are therefore disbelievers.

We can conclude that the only reason it came to his mind to write (or copy)

¹ Which, come to find out, wasn’t really his idea or work. More on that later, *in sha Allah*.

such an article is only to defend the apostate *tawaghit* who rule by man-made laws, among other nullifiers of Islam. He then claims “the term taghut can refer to the unbelievers and to the heads of misguidance from the Muslims.” However, is this the case?

Leaders of Misguidance

After putting forward the ridiculous allegation that the ‘*ulama* said heads of misguidance are ‘Muslim *tawaghit*’, an obvious contradiction which is equivalent to saying ‘Muslim *kuffar*’, he brings several quotes in an attempt to substantiate the claim. And we will quote verbatim those relevant to heads of misguidance he mentioned:

Imam al-Jawhari stated in *As-Sibah*, “*At-taghut*: the soothsayer, *Shaytan*, and every leader of misguidance.”²

Ibn Mandhur stated, “*At-taghut*: Whatever is worshipped besides Allah, the Mighty and Majestic; and every leader of misguidance is a *taghut*.”³

And he also said, “Ash-Sha’bi, ‘Ata, and Mujahid all said, “The sorcerer, the magician. The *taghut* is *Shaytan*, the soothsayer, and every head of misguidance.”⁴

Regarding the statement of Allah, “And We sent a messenger to every nation calling them to the worship of Allah and to abandon the *taghut*,” al-Qurtubi in his *tafsir* stated, “Meaning: abandon everything that is worshipped besides Allah, such as *Shaytan*, the soothsayers, the idols, and everyone that calls to misguidance.”

Can anyone see in these quotes where the scholars mentioned that a Muslim

² *Mukhtar as-Sibah*, p. 265.

³ *Lisan al-Arab*, v. 8, p. 444.

⁴ Ibid.

can be a *taghut* or a *taghut* a Muslim? What is mentioned is only that the leaders and heads of *dalala* (misguidance) are *tawaghit*. (The reason for this will come, *in sha Allah*.) Abu Khabithah brings no further evidence for his claim and merely makes an absurd interpretation that fits inside his set agenda. When the meaning of *taghut* is known beforehand by reading (and understanding) what the ‘*ulama* have written on the topic and that every *taghut* is a *kafir* the speech above is clearly seen to mean the heads, callers, and leaders of *kufr* and *shirk* are *tawaghit*, in comparison to the layman from the *kuffar* and *mushrikin* who are not. And here I would like to press pause on Abu Khabithah’s article and take a glance at the meaning of *taghut* from the works of the ‘*ulama* and answer the question ‘is every *taghut* a *kafir*?’. Because when one knows the truth of a certain matter to begin with, one can shift through the falsehood and see them clearly, by Allah’s permission. But when one does not have sufficient knowledge it is quite easy to be misled and ‘dazzled,’ so to speak.

The Meaning of *Taghut* in the Quran

First, let us see how ‘*taghut*’ is used in the Quran, mentioned a total of eight times throughout:

(1)

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ ۚ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ ۚ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ
بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

“There is no compulsion in the *din*. Verily, the right path has become distinct from the wrong path. So whoever disbelieves in the *taghut* and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.”⁵

⁵ Surah al-Baqarah: 256.

(2)

اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

“Allah is the Protector of those who believe. He brings them out from darkness into light. But as for those who disbelieve, their helpers and allies are *taghut*, they bring them out from light into darkness. Those are the dwellers of the Fire, and they will abide therein forever.”⁶

(3)

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْجِبْتِ وَالطَّاغُوتِ
وَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هُؤُلَاءِ أَهْدَىٰ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا سَبِيلًا

“Have you not seen those who were given a portion of the Book? They believe in *al-jibt* and the *taghut* and say to the disbelievers that they are better guided as regards the way than the believers.”⁷

(4)

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا بِمَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ
يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُتَحَاكَمُوا إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ وَقَدْ أُمِرُوا أَن يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ
أَن يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا

“Have you not seen those who claim to believe in what sent down to you and what was sent down before you? They wish to go for judgment to the *taghut* while they have been ordered to disbelieve in it. And *Shaytan* wishes to lead them far astray.”⁸

⁶ Surah al-Baqarah: 257.

⁷ Surah an-Nisa: 51.

⁸ Surah an-Nisa: 60.

(5)

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ
الطَّاغُوتِ فَقاتِلُوا أَوْلِيَاءَ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطَانِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا

“Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah. While those who disbelieve fight in the cause of the *taghut*. So fight against the allies of *Shaytan*; verily, the plot of *Shaytan* is weak.”⁹

(6)

قُلْ هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِشَرٍّ مِنْ ذَلِكَ مَثُوبَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَغَضِبَ عَلَيْهِ
وَجَعَلَ مِنْهُمْ الْقِرَدَةَ وَالْخَنَازِيرَ وَعَبَدَ الطَّاغُوتَ أُولَئِكَ شَرٌّ مَكَانًا وَأَضَلُّ عَنْ
سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ

“Say: ‘Shall I inform you of something worse than that, regarding the recompense from Allah: those (Jews) who incurred the curse of Allah and His wrath, and those of whom He transformed into monkeys and pigs, and those who worshipped the *taghut*; such are worse in rank, and far more astray from the right path.’”¹⁰

(7)

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ فَمِنْهُمْ
مَنْ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الضَّلَالَةُ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا
كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ

“And verily, We have sent among every group of people a messenger [ordering]: ‘worship Allah and avoid the *taghut*.’ Then of them were some whom Allah guided and of them were some whom the straying was justified. So travel through the land and see what was the end of those who denied.”¹¹

⁹ Surah an-Nisa: 76.

¹⁰ Surah al-Maidah: 60.

¹¹ Surah an-Nahl: 36.

(8)

وَالَّذِينَ اجْتَنَبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ أَنْ يَعْبُدُوهَا وَأَنَابُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَىٰ فَبَشِّرْ عِبَادِ

“And those who avoid the *taghut* by not worshipping it and turn to Allah, for them are glad tidings; so announce the good news to My slaves.”¹²

The Definition of *Taghut* from the ‘*Ulama*

Second, we will take a look at what some of the ‘*ulama* have said. Shaykh ‘Ali al-Khudayr (*fakallahu asrabu*) stated that the definition of *taghut* is:

[It is] a particular type of exaggeration derived from *tughyan* which is to exceed, to go beyond, and to increase. From it is “*tagha al-ma*” (translated as: the water rose above its limits), meaning: increased...

The terms the Salaf used in defining it differed. Ibn Abi Hatim narrated that ‘Umar ibnul-Khattab (*radiyallahu ‘anhu*) said that ‘the *taghut* is the *Shaytan*.’ Jabir mentioned that it is the soothsayer. Malik said, ‘It is what is worshipped besides Allah.’ Muhammad ibn Sirin said that the *taghut* is the sorcerer, and it was said ‘the transgressors from the People of the Book.’ Ibnul-Jawzi made mention in *Zad al-Masir* in his explanation of the Verse of the Throne when examining these various definitions that they are from the category of *tafsir* by some of its features.

The comprehensive explanation of *taghut* is the definition of ibnul-Qayyim (*rahimahullah*), ‘The *taghut* is that which exceeds its limit by the slave whether by being worshipped, followed, or obeyed.’ ‘Worshipped’ is what ‘Umar and Malik mentioned. ‘Followed’ includes the transgressors from the People of Book. ‘Obeyed’ includes the sorcerer, the soothsayer, and every ruler and includes the evil scholars, evil leaders, and evil worshippers.

¹² Surah az-Zumar: 17.

And here is more precise definition than ibnul-Qayyim's: Each and every going beyond in *kufir*. For example, the abandoner of the *salah* is a *kafir*, but if he calls to abandon the *salah* or punishes whoever performs it, then this is exceeding the bounds in *kufir*, and he is a *taghut*. It is *shirk* to sacrifice for other than Allah, so if he calls to sacrifice for other than Allah or beautifies it [in the eyes of the people], then this is exceeding the bounds in *kufir*, and he is a *taghut*.

Taken from ibnul-Qayyim's definition are three types of *tawaghit*: (i) the *tawaghit* of worship, and included in that is whoever is worshipped besides Allah while being pleased with it, whoever calls the people to the worship of himself; *Shaytan* enters into that, as well, along with the idols; (ii) the *tawaghit* of following, which includes scholars and worshippers: the evil scholars and the devious worshippers; (iii) the *tawaghit* of obedience, and it includes the leaders and heads of tribes who make matters permissible or impermissible besides Allah; likewise, soothsayers, magicians, legislators, and the rulers who rule by other than what Allah revealed.¹³

Mujahid (d. 102 H - *rahimahullah*) said:

الطاغوت : الشيطان في صورة إنسان يتحاكمون إليه

“The *taghut* is *Shaytan* in the form of man whom they seek judgment from.”¹⁴

An-Nawawi (d. 676 H - *rahimahullah*) stated:

قال الليث وأبو عبيدة والكسائي وجماهير أهل اللغة : الطاغوت كل ما عبد من دون الله تعالى ، وقال ابن عباس ومقاتل والكلبي وغيرهم : الطاغوت الشيطان ، وقيل : هو الأصنام ، قال الواحدي : الطاغوت يكون واحدا

¹³ See his elucidation of *Usul ath-Thalathah*.

¹⁴ *Tafsir Mujahid*, p. 284.

وجمعا ويؤنث ويذكر

“Al-Layth, Abu ‘Ubaydah, al-Kisa’i, and the majority of linguists said that they *taghut* is anything that is worshipped other than Allah (*ta‘ala*). And ibn ‘Abbas, Muqatil, al-Kalbi, and others, stated that the *taghut* is the *Shaytan*. It was said it is the idols, as well. Al-Wahidi said that the *taghut* could be singular or plural, female or male.”¹⁵

Al-Wahidi (d. 468 H - *rahimahullah*), himself a distinguished scholar of the Arabic language, related that:

أهل اللغة: الطاغوت: كل ما عبد من دون الله

“All the scholars of the language said that the *taghut* is anything that is worshipped besides Allah.”¹⁶

Ibn ‘Atiyyah (d. 541 H - *rahimahullah*) said:

وقال بعض العلماء: كل ما عبد من دون الله فهو طاغوت. وهذه تسمية صحيحة في كل معبود يرضى ذلك كفرعون ونمرود ونحوه، وأما من لا يرضى ذلك كعزير وعيسى عليهما السلام، ومن لا يعقل كالأوثان فسميت طاغوتا في حق العبد، وذلك مجاز، إذ هي بسبب الطاغوت الذي يأمر بذلك ويحسنه وهو الشيطان

“Some of the scholars said: ‘Everything that is worshipped besides Allah is a *taghut*.’ And this labelling is correct with respect to what is worshipped and is pleased with that like Fir‘awn and Nimrod and so forth. But as for those who are not pleased with such, like ‘Uzayr and ‘Isa (*alayhimas-salam*), and those who do not have any intelligence, like the idols, the labelling is in relation to the right of the slaves - and that is exceeding the boundaries. As it is because of the *taghut* that orders them and beautifies that for them - and that is the

¹⁵ See *Sharh Muslim*, “Kitab al-Iman”.

¹⁶ Quoted in *Ad-Durar as-Saniyyah*.

Shaytan.”¹⁷

And al-‘Allamah ibnul-Qayyim (d. 751 H- *rahimahullah*) said,

The *taghut* is anything by which the slave transgresses the limits through worship, following, or obedience. Thus the *taghut* of any people is he whom they seek judgment from other than Allah and His messenger, or whom they worship alongside Allah, or whom they follow without guidance from Allah, or whom they obey in what they do not know to be in obedience to Allah. These are the *tawaghit* of the world; if you were to contemplate them and, at the same time, contemplate the condition of the people, you would see that most people have turned from the worship of Allah to the worship of the *taghut*, from seeking judgment from Allah and His messenger to seeking judgment from the *taghut*, and from obeying and following Allah and His messenger, to obeying and following the *taghut*.¹⁸

Shaykh Muhammad Hamid al-Fiqi (d. 1378 H - *rahimahullah*) mentioned,

الذي يستخلص من كلام السلف رضي الله عنهم: أن الطاغوت كل ما
صَرَفَ العبد وصدّه عن عبادة الله وإخلاص الدين والطاعة لله ولرسوله،
سواء في ذلك الشيطان من الجن والشيطان من الإنس والأشجار
والأحجار وغيرها

“That which we find in the statements of the Salaf (*radiyallahu ‘anhum*) is that the *taghut* is whatever deviates the slave away and prevents him from the worship of Allah, being sincere to Him in the *din* and in obeying Allah and His messenger (*sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*), whether that is from the *shayatin* of *jinn* or from the *shayatin* of humans, trees, rocks, etc.”¹⁹

¹⁷ See *Al-Muharrar al-Wajiz*.

¹⁸ See *I‘lam al-Muwaqqi‘in*.

¹⁹ See his footnotes on *Fath al-Majid*.

Shaykh Muhammad al-Amin ash-Shanqiti (d. 1393 H - *rahimahullah*) stated:

والتحقيق أن كل ما عبد من دون الله فهو طاغوت، والحظ الأكبر من ذلك للشيطان

“The *taghut*²⁰ is that anything that is worshipped besides Allah is a *taghut*; the greatest of which is the Shaytan.”²¹

Salih al-Fawzan, a scholar the *Madakhilah* worship, was asked: “What is the meaning of *taghut*? And is every *taghut* a *kafir*?” He responded with:

الطاغوت في اللغة مشتق من الطغيان وهو مجاوزة الحد ومجازة الحق إلى الباطل ومجازة الإيمان إلى الكفر وما أشبه ذلك والطواغيت كثيرون وكل طاغوت فهو كافر بلا شك

“*Taghut* linguistically is derived from *tughyān*, and it is exceeding the limits. Going beyond the truth to falsehood, going beyond *iman* to *kufir*, and what is similar to that. The *tawaghit* are many, and every *taghut* is a *kafir*, without a doubt.”²²

This last quote from Salih al-Fawzan is the utmost clearest I found while researching this matter of ‘is every *taghut* a *kafir*?’ Possibly because the matter is plainly obvious and is equivalent to asking ‘is every *mushrik* a *kafir*?’ Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibrahim in his elucidation of *Usul ath-Thalathalah* asserted with almost the same clarity, after explaining ibn al-Qayyim’s definition of *taghut*: “And every one of them is a *kafir*.” The only quotes from scholars or references I found that suggested otherwise were contemporaries like ibn ‘Uthaymin who said specifically that heads of *bida’* were *tawaghit*. But even that is not lucid enough and could be restricted in reference to *bida’* that is major *kufir*: like saying the Quran is created or that *iman* is only a belief in the heart or negating the attributes of Allah, etc. All of which is a *bida’*, in addition to being

²⁰ Meaning, what is established after verification and research.

²¹ See his *tafsir* of *surah* al-Baqarah in *Adwan al-Bayan*.

²² See link for the full answer <https://www.alfawzan.af.org.sa/en/node/10323>.

kufr. We have amply amount of statements from the *Salaf* proclaiming *takfir* upon those who call to their *bida'*, as well. Another is ibn Baz,²³ however, his words also seem to be misunderstood, and the text from him I was able to locate was cut - a part in the middle being left out. Having said that, we aren't looking into what he or ibn 'Uthaymin meant here. Nor is that really relevant. I only mentioned them because of the scarcity of sayings of scholars merely hinting that the *taghut* is somehow not a *kafir*.

What we can clarify here is the misunderstanding that could arise in saying that not every *taghut* is a *kafir*, because technically this is true. Let me explain. A tree or a rock or a statue is not a *kafir*. You don't say inanimate objects are *kuffar*. Nor are they considered *tawaghit* just by themselves. They become *tawaghit* when the slaves exceed their right with respect to worship. And this qualifies the statement from ibn 'Atiyyah above that "the labelling is in relation to the right of the slaves - and that is exceeding the boundaries." So those objects become *tawaghit* when they are worshipped besides Allah, and it is a must for one to have *kufr* in them to be considered a Muslim in reality. And this point is lost on many, not the least the *ghulat Haẓimiyyah*, and those like them, who equate *kufr* in the *taghut* with *takfir* of the *taghut*.

As pointed out above, you don't declare *takfir* of an idol or a grave that is worshipped besides Allah, due to them being inanimate objects. But in regard to the label of '*taghut*' being applied upon a person or a *jinn* (like Shaytan or someone who rules by other than what Allah revealed) then this is equivalent to *takfir* and labelling someone a *mushrik* or a *kafir*. It is this second labelling that Salih al-Fawzan is referring to in his statement that "every *taghut* is a *kafir*, without a doubt."²⁴

²³ I know, go figure it would be these two - I do not know what al-Albani said.

²⁴ The only reason I am bringing his words here is because of their transparency and the claim by Abu Khabithah that the label of *taghut* on a person as being "distorted by the radical preachers to refer to the disbelievers or to major idolatry." So will he stick by his implied speech and say that al-Fawzan is one of those "radical preachers"? And assuming he (he won't) or someone else does, it is *batil* and goes against the Texts and the agreement of the *'ulama*.

***Taghut* According to Shaykh al-Mujaddid Muhammad ibn ‘Abdil-Wahhab**

Shaykh al-Mujaddid Muhammad ibn ‘Abdil-Wahhab (*rahimahullah*) revived the ‘*aqidah* of the *Salaf as-Salih* for this *ummah* and has very clear words in regard to *takefir* and fighting the *mushrikin*; he defined the *taghut* as:

الطاغوت عام: فكل ما عُبد من دون الله ورضي بالعبادة من معبود أو متبوع أو مطاع في غير طاعة الله ورسوله فهو طاغوت

“The *taghut* is general; so anything that is worshipped besides Allah, being pleased with that *‘ibadah* [directed to it] - whether it is a thing worshipped or followed or obeyed in other than the obedience of Allah and His messenger - is a *taghut*.”²⁵

His speech and the *fatawa* of the scholars who followed him in the Arabian Peninsula are spears in the hearts and souls of people like Abu Khabithah and the *Madakhilah*. Similar to the *ghulat Haẓimiyyah*, they cherry pick words in order to deceive the ignorant that the notable scholar they are quoting is in agreement with their corrupt creed. Abu Khabithah follows that trend here by asserting:

It is somewhat surprising that modern-day radicals should attempt to utilise the statements of Shaikh Muhammad bin ‘Abdul-Wahhab (*rahimahullah*) to support their argument, since he was from the scholars who consistently warned from the performance of *takfir* and from disobeying the Muslim rulers, even if they be from the most tyrannical of rulers, as he has expressed in the famous letter to the people of al-Qasim, *ar-Risalah ila Ahlil-Qasim*.

First, if the shaykh was alive today Abu Khabithah would be one of the first to

²⁵ See his short essay *Ma‘ana at-Taghut wa Ra’us Anna’ihi*.

post the shaykh's picture with his eyes marked out with red warning against him while calling him a '*keharji*' and '*takfiri*'. The issue that ibn 'Abdil-Wahhab is most hated for is *takfir* of the *mushrikin* who ascribed themselves to Islam and fighting them. He said in the third treatise from his *Rasail ash-Shaykhsiyyah*:

إذا كانوا أكثر من عشرين سنة يقرون ليلاً ونهاراً سراً وجهاراً أن التوحيد الذي أظهر هذا الرجل هو دين الله ورسوله لكن الناس لا يطيعوننا، وأن الذي أنكره هو الشرك وهو صادق في إنكاره، ولكن لو يسلم من التكفير والقتال كان على حق

“If they were for more than twenty years affirming day and night, secretly and openly, that the *tawhid* which this man (i.e., ibn 'Abdil-Wahhab) displayed is the *din* of Allah and His messenger, however the people do not obey us, and that what he rejected was *shirk* while he was truthful in his rejection, however, only if he would abstain from *takfir* and fighting, he would be upon the truth.”

And he said in his twenty ninth treatise:

وعرفتم أنهم يقولون لو يترك أهل العارض التكفير والقتال كانوا على دين الله ورسوله

“And you know what they say, that if the people of confrontation (i.e., ibn 'Abdil-Wahhab) would abandon *takfir* and fighting, they would be upon the *din* of Allah and His messenger.”

And he said in his thirty eighth treatise:

ولكنهم يجادلونكم اليوم بشبهة واحدة فاصغوا لجوابها، وذلك أنهم يقولون كل هذا حق نشهد أنه دين الله ورسوله إلا التكفير والقتال، والعجب ممن يخفى عليه جواب هذا إذا أقروا أن هذا دين الله ورسوله كيف لا يكفر من أنكره وقتل من أمر به وحبسهم؟ كيف لا يكفر من أمر بحبسهم؟ كيف لا يكفر من جاء إلى أهل الشرك يحثهم على لزوم دينهم وتزيينه لهم ويحثهم على قتل الموحدين وأخذ مالهم؟ كيف لا يكفر وهو

يشهد أن الذي يحث عليه أن الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم أنكره؟ ونهى عنه وسماه الشرك بالله ويشهد أن الذي يبغضه ويبغض أهله ويأمر المشركين بقتلهم هو دين الله ورسوله،

واعلموا أن الأدلة على تكفير المسلم الصالح إذا أشرك بالله، أو صار مع المشركين على الموحدين ولو لم يشرك أكثر من أن تحصر من كلام الله وكلام رسوله وكلام أهل العلم كلهم

“However, today they argue with one misconception, so know the answer to it, and what they say is that all of this is the truth, we bear witness that it is the *din* of Allah and His messenger - except for *takefir* and fighting. And what is astonishing is the one who is not able to answer this [misconception]. If they affirmed that this is the *din* of Allah and His messenger, how can we not make *takefir* of the one who rejects it, kills those who commands it, and imprisons them? How can the one who sends orders to imprison them not be a *kafir*? How can the one who comes to the people of *shirk* and urges them to hold onto their religion and adorns it for them, and encourages them in killing the *muwabbhidin* and taking their wealth not be a *kafir*? How can he not be a *kafir* if what he urges and encourages is what the Messenger (*sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) rejected? He forbade it and called it *shirk* with Allah, and he testified that the one who has enmity to them and hates their people, and orders the *mushrikin* to be killed is the *din* of Allah and His messenger.

“Know [O Muslim], that the proofs supporting declaring *takefir* of a righteous Muslim if he commits *shirk* with Allah, or he assisted the *mushrikin* [in fighting] against the *muwabbhidin*, even if he did not commit *shirk*, are too much to be counted from the words of Allah, His messenger, and the sayings of all the scholars.”

The letter Abu Khabithah references is what the shaykh sent explaining his creed due to the lies and rumors that spread from people who share the same qualities of Abu Khabithah in slandering and lying upon the *muwabbhidin* to frighten the people away from the truth and keep the people following them

instead of it. In the letter, the shaykh essentially summarizes *Al-'Aqidah al-Wasitiyyah* by ibn Taymiyyah; and it is the '*aqidah*' of Ahlus-Sunnah. Part of that '*aqidah*', which we believe in, is obeying and not fighting against the Muslim ruler, even if he is not righteous, as long as he does not come with clear *kufr* which we have evidence from Allah for. In addition, we do not declare *takfir* due to sins that are less than major *kufr*. Nothing new here.

The Heads of the *Tawaghit*

Abu Khabithah continues in his covering of the truth:

Regarding the discussion surrounding the subject of at-taghut, Shaikh Muhammad bin 'Abdul-Wahhab said:

“The taghuts are many, and their heads are five:

Iblis, may Allah's curse be upon him,
 The one who is worshipped and he is pleased with that,
 The one who claims anything from the knowledge of the Unseen,
 The one who calls people to worship him,
 The one who judges by other than that which Allah has revealed.

And the proof is His saying, the Most High: 'There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in at-Taghut and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is the All-Hearer, All-Knower.' And this is the meaning of *la ilaha illallah*.”

So some may understand from this that the Shaikh is declaring as an unbeliever the one who rules by other than what Allah has revealed. However, this is not the case for two reasons: Firstly (spelling error taken from the original), due to the consensus from Ibn 'Abdul-Barr who

narrated that ruling by other than what Allāh has revealed constitutes minor disbelief that does not exit from the fold of Islām (At-Tamhīd of Ibn ‘Abdul-Barr, 5/74-75)

These five heads of the *tawaghit* is what is commonly listed and known from the shaykh and taken from his book *Al-Usul ath-Thalathah*. He adds a sixth, if taken altogether, in his short essay speaking in particular on *kufr bit-taghut* and the heads of the *tawaghit*: the oppressive ruler who changes the rulings of Allah. All are clear in their reference to being *kuffar* and not *Muslimin*; one reason for that being the proof the shaykh brings:

فَمَنْ يَكْفُرُ بِالطَّاغُوتِ

“So whoever disbelieves in the *taghut*.”

And this is *kufr bit-taghut*. Does one have *kufr bil-Muslim*? Disbelief in the Muslim? Has anyone heard of such a thing? And how does one actualize this *ayah* that the shaykh uses after naming the five heads of the *tawaghit* if the *taghut* can be a Muslim? The description of *kufr bit-taghut* is outlined by Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Abdil-Wahhab also in five matters:

(1)

تعتقد بطلان عبادة غير الله

The belief in the invalidity of worship to other than Allah.

(2)

وتتركها

To abandon it.

(3)

وتبغضها

To hate it.

(4)

وتكفر أهلهاTo perform *takefir* of its people.

(5)

وتعاديهم

To have hostility towards them for the sake of Allah.

Does it make any sense for the shaykh to refer to anything here except what is considered major *kufr* and the *kuffar*? And if you say the heads of misguidance being referred to previously are in reference to *Muslimin* then it would imply having animosity and declaring *takefir* of the layman Muslim who follows him. The scholars are innocent of such absurdities and recklessness. Most likely, it is doubtful that it ever entered the shaykh's mind that someone would come later and proclaim he was speaking about any Muslim here when speaking specifically of the heads of the *tawaghit*.

Ruling by Other Than What Allah Revealed

The first proof Abu Khabithah comes with to show that the shaykh (*rahimahullah*) does not declare *takefir* of the one who rules by other than what Allah revealed, while calling him a head of the *tawaghit*, is not an evidence for that. Citing Imam ibn 'Abdil-Barr's (*rahimahullah*) *ijma'* does not cover the words of ibn 'Abdil-Wahhab. Because he is referring to the ruler who knows the ruling of Allah and rules by other than what Allah revealed, as is clear, and not the Muslim ruler who leaves (*tark*) ruling by what Allah revealed in some matters while outwardly adhering to the ruling of Allah. The former is a *taghut kafir*, and the latter is a disobedient Muslim who committed a major sin and is not considered a *taghut* - and definitely not a head of the *tawaghit*, even though some '*ulama* from the *Salaf* considered him a *kafir*.

An example of the latter is when a case is brought to him concerning someone who stole, and the conditions are all met to implement the hukm upon him.

However, he is close to the person at hand and his whims get the better of him, so he places a preventative factor that is false or disparages one of the witnesses, even though he knows they are all trustworthy. Outwardly it appears that he is ruling by what Allah revealed, but inwardly he is ruling according to his whims. This is a major sin like committing fornication as long as he doesn't hold it permissible for himself or reject the ruling of Allah. The former example is when the same case is brought to him concerning the thief, and he judges according to a man-made law, a tribal code, or his whims. Outwardly and inwardly he has judged by other than what Allah revealed. This is major *kufir* like prostrating to a grave.

However, Abu Khabithah and the *Madakhaliah* do not see any form of not judging by what Allah revealed as major *kufir* unless one comes with an action of the heart that is near impossible to know of. And concerning the *ijma'* of ibn 'Abdil-Barr, then, it needs looking into. Because we have statements from 'ulama from the *Salaf* stating whoever knowingly leaves the *hukm* of Allah in a case is a *kafir*.²⁶ Additionally, he does not cite a consensus that ruling *by other* than what Allah revealed is minor *kufir*, he said specifically:

**وأجمع العلماء على أن الجور في الحكم من الكبائر لمن تعمد ذلك عالماً
به**

“The scholars agree that *janr* in relation to judging is from the major sins - for whoever knowingly and intentionally does it.”

This is the exact statement Abu Khabithah is referring to. Can anyone point out where ibn 'Abdil-Barr says ruling *by other* than what Allah revealed is minor *kufir*? What we should pay attention to here is what is meant by the word '*janr*'. *Janr* in English could be translated something along the lines as 'unjust' or 'tyrannical' and is similar to a more common term: '*dhulm*', which is oppression, and it is putting something in its incorrect spot. In his explanation of *Sahih Muslim*, an-Nawawi stated:

²⁶ References will come, *in sha Allah*.

الجور هو : الميل عن الاستواء والاعتدال ، وكل ما خرج عن الاعتدال فهو جور ، سواء كان حراما أو مكروها

“*Al-jawr* is turning away from fairness and justness; so anything that departs from justice is *al-jawr*. Irregardless whether it was something *haram* or *makruh*.”

Here it is in reference to ruling unjustly where people do not get their rights, and so he does not judge by what Allah revealed. While ruling *by other* than what Allah revealed is something particular. In addition, one should keep in mind that the *Salaf* disagreed over the one who intentionally *leaves* the ruling of Allah and if it is major *kufir* or a major sin. This is in contrast to ruling *by other* than what Allah revealed. Interpreting the meaning of the statement of Allah (*ta'ala*): “And whoever does not judge by what Allah revealed, then it is those who are the *kafirun*,” as-Suddi (d. 127 H) said:

ومن لم يحكم بما أنزلت فتركه عمدا ، أو جار وهو يعلم ، فهو من الكافرين

“Whoever does not judge by what I revealed and leaves it intentionally or unjustly, while he knows (the ruling from Allah), then he is from *al-kafirun*.”²⁷

And al-Baghawi (d. 516 H) in his *tafsir* relates from a group of scholars that:

وقال العلماء : هذا إذا رد نص حكم الله عيانا عمدا ، فأما من خفي عليه أو أخطأ في تأويل فلا

“The *‘ulama* said this is when [judging in a case] he goes against the ruling of Allah deliberately. But if the matter was unclear to him or he made a mistake in its interpretation, then no [it does not apply].”

Whether these statements are in reference to merely *leaving* the ruling of Allah

²⁷ See *Tafsir ibn Kathir* (in Arabic because this is cropped out of the English translation published from the lands ruled by *tawaghit*).

or leaving it and ruling *by other* than what Allah revealed is a discussion the *‘ulama* spoke about and differed. And there is much more we could get into here but that is sufficient to refute any notion that the *Salaf* have an *ijma’* that ruling *by other* than what Allah revealed is minor *kufr*.²⁸

Clarifying the Misunderstanding in the Plagiarizing

Abu Khabithah resumes:

and secondly that the term at-Taghut does not necessitate major disbelief. This is made very clear in the following statement of Shaikh Muhammad bin ‘Abdul-Wahhab :

“The taghuts are many, and the clear ones to us from them are five:

The first of them is Satan.

The tyrannical ruler.

The one who takes bribery.

The one who is worshipped and pleased with that.

The one who acts without knowledge.” [14]

So he considered that from the heads of the clear taghuts are: the tyrannical ruler, the one who takes bribes and the one who does not act upon knowledge – and these affairs constitute minor disbelief (al-kufr al-asghar) in their origin. Indeed the one who takes bribes is not an unbeliever outside of the fold of Islam by the consensus (ijma’) of the scholars, unless he makes that permissible. So this makes it perfectly clear

²⁸ The official committee of scholars of *Sa‘udiyyah* said some years ago that the one who claims that there is an *ijma’* that ruling by other than what Allah revealed in *tashri’ al-‘am* is minor *kufr* has lied upon Ahlus-Sunnah due to *jahl* or evil intention. See *Risalah at-Tabdhir min al-Irja*.

that the Shaikh and the scholars before him did not restrict the title at-Taghut to only the disbeliever, rather the term can also refer to a Muslim upon sin or tyranny or the one who does not act upon knowledge or the person of misguidance who misguides others, such as the ideological heads of the Kharijites.

First, these aren't exactly Abu Khabithah's words; he plagiarized them from a scholar of the *taghut*: Abu 'Umar Usamah al-'Utaybi. The latter²⁹ wrote in Arabic:

**فجعل من رؤوس الطواغيت الواضحين: حاكم الجور واكل الرشوة
والعامل بغير علم وهي من الكفر الأصغر في الأصل.**

بل أكل الرشوة بإجماع العلماء ليس من الكفار إلا إذا استحل ذلك.

**فتبين مما سبق أن شيخ الإسلام محمد بن عبد الوهاب لا يحصر
الطاغوت في الكافر بل يتعدى ذلك إلى رؤوس الضلال والفسق كآكل
الرشوة ومن يعمل بغير علم ومن يجور في الحكم حتى ولو كان قاضياً أو
مدرساً أو نحو ذلك**

And this can be translated virtually as what Abu Khabithah wrote; although he portrays them as his own speech and adds a little flavor to it at the end with “such as the ideological heads of the Kharijites.” In fact, the whole article is a summary taken from the aforementioned scholar of the *taghut*, with the above and what comes after it a near word-for-word translation.

Admittedly, the text quoted from ibn 'Abdil-Wahhab could be seen as problematic if taken at face value without knowledge. And it would not come as a surprise if the *Madakhilah* started celebrating and handing out sweets when they came across this quote. Because indeed, the one who takes a bribe or acts without knowledge could not be a *kafir*. But like with other heads of the

²⁹ Who, come to find out, said this about Abu Khabithah in a tweet dated Aug. 19, 2018: “The man is extremely ignorant who desires leadership and is manipulative. It is a mistake to enable his likes to partake in *da'wah* while he has severe ignorance and love of leadership.”

tawaghit there is a *tafsil* and a *sharh* (i.e., a further explanation). Examples being the elucidations you will find from the *‘ulama* on the one who does not judge by what Allah revealed, when he becomes a *taghut kafir* and when not, and the one who claims knowledge of the unseen, the levels therein when he becomes a *taghut kafir* and when not, and so on. Each listed *taghut* must be understood in light of the shaykh’s own definition of the *taghut* that passed above. So when we know the meaning of *taghut* and that every *taghut* is a *kafir*, and we compare these words with his more famous words on the *tawaghit* in light of his own definition of the *taghut*, we see exactly who he is referring to here. Thus the first *taghut* mentioned is as he said: the *Shaytan*. The second one he mentioned as:

حاكم الجور

“The tyrannical ruler” is:

الحاكم الجائر المغير لأحكام الله

“The oppressive ruler who changes the rulings of Allah.”

The third one he mentioned as:

آكل الرشوة

“The one who takes bribes” is:

الذي يحكم بغير ما أنزل الله

“The one who rules by other than what Allah revealed.”

The fourth he mentioned as “the one worshipped and is pleased with that” is what comes fifth in his other listing. And finally, the fifth one he mentioned as:

العامل بغير علم

“The one who acts without knowledge” comes fourth in his other listing:

الذي يدعي علم الغيب من دون الله

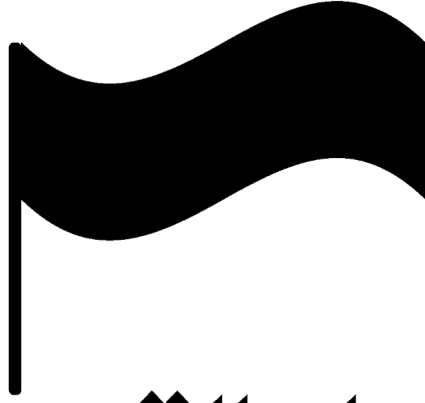
“The one who claims knowledge of the unseen besides Allah.”

And so when we take his clear speech and put it up against his unclear speech, what he intends is evident. Why I mentioned the one who takes bribes as meaning the one who rules *by other* than what Allah revealed is due to what you will find in the *tafsir* of the *ayah* in *surah* al-Maidah. The matter of taking a bribe being major or minor *kufr* depends on the reality and situation of whoever is taking a bribe. If he takes a bribe in order to *leave* ruling in a case it is minor *kufr*. But if he takes a bribe and rules *by other* than what Allah revealed it is major *kufr*. This is the opinion chosen by Shaykh al-Mujaddid Muhammad ibn ‘Abdil-Wahhab based upon what is apparent from him placing him from the heads of the *tawaghit*. It was also the chosen opinion of ibn Mas‘ud and his students, alongside other *Sahabah* and *Tabi‘in*. Al-Qasimi (*rahimahullah*) said in his *tafsir*:

ونقل في الباب عن ابن مسعود والحسن والنخعي؛ أن هذه الآيات الثلاث عامة في اليهود وفي هذه الأمة، فكل من ارتشى وبدل الحكم، فحكم بغير حكم الله، فقد كفر وظلم وفسق، وإليه ذهب السدي، لأنه ظاهر الخطاب

“Concerning this topic, it is reported from ibn Mas‘ud, al-Hasan [al-Basri], and an-Nakha‘i that these three *ayat* (in *surah* al-Maidah) are general in its application to the Jews and this *ummah*. So whoever takes a bribe and substitutes the [correct] ruling, and thus rules by other than the ruling of Allah, then he has disbelieved, oppressed, and acted immorally. This is also the view of as-Suddi, because it is what is apparent of the address.”

And Allah knows best. May Allah send *salah* and *salam* upon our prophet Muhammad, his family, and his companions.



أهل التوحيد

Publications